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Major County Sheriffs' Association

April 20, 2001

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The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WT Docket No. 00-32

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing you on behalf of the Major County Sheriffs' Association to express our concern about the FCC's intention to auction 50 MHz of spectrum in the 4940-4990 MHz (4.9 GHz) band, rather than allocating this critically needed spectrum to public safety for new broadband public safety applications.

Major County Sheriffs' Association is a professional organization comprised of elected sheriffs throughout the United States who represent populations of at least 500,000 residents.

Back in 1996, the public safety community identified the need for 95 MHz of additional spectrum to meet our communications needs over the next ten years. Of this amount, the greatest need will be for advanced wideband and broadband technologies. To date, the FCC has allocated 24 MHz to public safety users in the new 746 MHz band. There are new emerging broadband technologies and applications appearing on the horizon that will require significantly wider bandwidths.

An example of an application used in law enforcement is the video linking of helicopter to ground in following a suspect. Solutions such as personal and vehicular area networks can wirelessly integrate a variety of existing and future devices to provide a safer environment for our officers. These include image and video cameras and viewers, mobile data terminals and all their peripheral devices, palmtops, and wireless long range headsets, microphones, earpieces and voice recognition to allow complete hands free operation. Very large data and image files can be rapidly and wirelessly transferred within Wireless Local Area Networks (WLAN), enabling images/fingerprints of wanted or missing persons, video clips of robberies, maps and layouts to be downloaded into police vehicle mobile computers as they leave the precinct. This same technology will also

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allow wireless uploads of videos, images and reports from the police vehicle to the command center or precinct. WLAN technology will also enable command centers to employ full motion video for remote controlled robotics in terrorist and other highly dangerous operations, and monitoring of officers or suspects in officer assistance and high risk situations to allow on scene decision making and assistance based on video transmissions. This technology would allow real time transmission of video and imagery from surveillance helicopters to command centers.

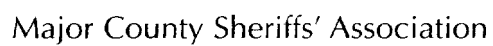
Although unlicensed consumer oriented broadband technologies are on the horizon in the nearby 5 GHz band, public safety agencies cannot rely on unlicensed spectrum for our mission critical applications. We must have dedicated spectrum and systems that assure the safety of our personnel via immediate priority access, uninterrupted transmissions, and guaranteed coverage and reliability. The proximity of this unlicensed and to the proposed public safety 4.9 GHz allocation allows us to leverage such standards based broadband technologies and yet have the dedicated, reliable, secure and enhanced featured broadband solutions that we require for our mission critical applications.

The Major County Sheriffs' Association urges you and the Commission to recognize our broadband spectrum needs and allocate this much needed 4.9 GHz band to the public safety community. Obtaining this spectrum is a critical step for public safety agencies such as ours to access these new advanced broadband solutions for our mission critical applications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick D. McGowan", written in a cursive style.

Sheriff Patrick D. McGowan
President
Major County Sheriffs' Association



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APR 23 2001

Federal Communications Commission **FCC MAIL ROOM**
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Abstract